



## Sort Thousands of Rows Individually

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**My lotto spreadsheet has about 1,500 rows, each containing numbers from a drawing. Each row has five columns with a number in each cell, but the numbers for each row are unsorted. How can I sort from lowest to highest in each row?**

**Bob Z.**

You can do that using Microsoft Excel's Sort feature, but the tedium might kill you before you reach the last of those 1,500 rows. Here is what you have to do. Highlight the first row and choose Sort from the Data menu. Excel asks whether you want to expand the selection. You don't want to do that, as it would sort the entire block of data based on the selected row. Instead, select Continue with the current selection and click on the Sort button. Now, in the Sort dialog, you must click on the Options button, select Sort left to right, click on OK, and click on OK again. That's one row down, 1,499 to go.

To save your sanity, you can create a new set of columns that contain your numbers in sorted order. Suppose your numbers start in cell A1 and occupy rows A through E. In cell G1, enter the formula =SMALL(\$A1:\$E1,1). Copy that formula across into cells H1 through K1. Edit each to change the second argument to 2, 3, 4, and 5.

For example, cell K1 would contain =SMALL(\$A1:\$E1,5). The formulas return the smallest number, the second smallest, and so on up to the fifth smallest. In other words, they display the five numbers from the first row in sorted order. Select G1 through K1 and press Ctrl-C. Select the rest of columns G through K, all the way to the bottom, and press Ctrl-V. Those columns now contain your lotto numbers with each row sorted from lowest to highest.

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